

# OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCE

## A Powerful Tool for Self-Research

*Out-of-body experiences are common to all humanity, but producing them at will and remaining lucid whilst outside the body requires ideal physical conditions as well as strong desire, concentration and determination.*

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Decades ago, the limitations of communications infrastructures provided something of a buffer between impactful world events and our sensibilities. Today, however, exposed as we are to real-time broadcasts, mass media and multi-media, more and more of us are finding it difficult to avoid reflecting upon the merit of our existence, the level of maturity of humankind and, as a natural consequence, the theme of evolution.

Fortunately, advances in sciences have enabled us to make sense of certain elements of our existence. Recent breakthroughs in technology and communication are doing so much to improve our levels of education and discernment that our questions about existence and evolution are becoming more precise and challenging. However, science, for all its sophistication, remains unable to provide us with a verifiable explanation of what happens to us after we die, for example.

Religion has traditionally played an important role in addressing enigmas such as these, and until quite recently religious perspectives were widely accepted, contributing much to the alleviation of our anxieties about death and the afterlife. But as our levels of knowledge and acumen increase, we are becoming less willing to accept unchallengeable "absolute" truths and mystical interpretations.

As a result, people all over the world are now searching for more precise, logical and personally confirmable answers to the age-old existential questions such as: "Where did I come from?", "Where will I go when I die?", "What is it like there?", "Who else will be there?" and "What is the purpose of my life?"

In response to this growing demand, a veritable plethora of "routes to enlightenment" has sprung up in the marketplace. Some of these are espoused through cleverly marketed products such as lectures, workshops, books and videos, the international commercial successes of which attest to a worldwide demand of massive proportions. Many of these methods, philosophies, theories and practices, however, exact a degree of faith on behalf of the individual and cannot be authenticated by objective means.

With so many alternatives on offer, we've almost reached the point where we need a course on what course to take. So how do we discriminate what has value from what has not? How can we really know what the *relative truth is*? And is it enough simply to believe in something because someone else does, because it appears to make sense or because it gives us a warm fuzzy feeling inside?

For the time being, science, through its conventional paradigm, has limitations and has developed no means by which to answer these questions or those mentioned earlier, as it is unable to confirm the existence of life in other dimensions.

In search for better means to achieve substantiated and verifiable answers, some scientists are looking into the *out-of-body experience* (OOBE), documented throughout history since ancient Egypt, as an effective tool for allowing personal verification of what lies beyond that which we can perceive with our physical senses.

By employing a more updated ontological model and scientific paradigm for research, scientists can investigate the existence of nonphysical dimensions, employing a variety of methods that include the analysis of detailed, consensual information from accounts of personal experiences of lucid OOBEs. Experimental research conducted by a number of scientific organisations further corroborates the reality of the OOBE phenomenon.

In light of this knowledge, the objective of this article is to detail further why the OOBE is such an important tool, underscore that the OOBE is a universal phenomenon well within the capabilities of every human being, explain some facts about the OOBE based on decades

of accumulated research, and demonstrate why we cannot afford to keep thinking of this natural, universal, long-acknowledged phenomenon as odd or extreme.

All readers are encouraged, however, *not* to believe in anything they read here but to experiment, have their own experiences and confirm for themselves the leading-edge relative truth expressed in this article.

### History of the out-of-body experience

The out-of-body experience, also commonly known as the *OOBE* or *astral travel*, is as natural as sleeping and breathing. During OOBEs, the consciousness (oneself, one's soul or spirit) acts independently of the physical body in a nonphysical (or extraphysical) dimension. Sometimes this is experienced with some awareness of what is actually occurring, but usually this is not the case—meaning that the individual also has no recall of the experience.

References to the OOBE are evidenced throughout human history. Across cultures, socioeconomic strata, genders, languages, nationalities, religions, civilisations and the ages, from the most ancient tribal societies to the modern societies of the 21st century, human beings have recorded the departure and subsequent return of a subtle body from the physical body with a remarkably high degree of consistency in describing the many different characteristics of the phenomenon.

Early evidence of the OOBE appeared in ancient Egypt between 3,000 and 5,000 years ago. The Egyptian priests were aware of the existence of the astral body; they called it the *Ka*. References to the OOBE later appeared in ancient Greece through the writings of a number of philosophers including Plato and Herodotus. Cases of conscious projections are also well documented in the Bible, for example in Ezekiel III:14; the Apocalypse of John 1:10–11 and 4:2; and in the Epistles of Paul of Tarsus, e.g., II Corinthians 12:2.

During the Middle Ages, due to the repressive influence of the Inquisition, the OOBE was studied and practised in secret within esoteric and occult movements. Information gathered was not made available to the general population. This need for secrecy contributed to the fabrication of various myths and untruths about the dangers of astral travel that persist today.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, a number of pioneers in this field of study had a great impact on society with the publishing of various works. Chief among them were the Swedish philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg, the French novelist Honoré de Balzac, with

his (autobiographical) novel *Louis Lambert*, and the creator of spiritism, Frenchman Allan Kardec.

Other key figures who made significant contributions towards giving some credibility to the OOBE as a real event were Apollonius of Tyana, Antonio of Padua and Padre Pío.

### The subtle bodies

From this historical perspective, the most telling conclusion to be drawn from studies and personal accounts of the OOBE is that human beings are more than just their physical bodies. When one experiences a lucid OOBE, one has irrefutable evidence that the physical body is merely a temporary "house" through which one's consciousness or awareness manifests in the physical dimension.

For what occurs during the OOBE (which usually takes place when the physical body is either in an altered state of consciousness or asleep) is a separation of the nonphysical (or extraphysical) body from the physical body. If the individual has awareness during the experience, he sees that his self-awareness resides in the extraphysical body, not in the physical body. The most concrete personal evidence of this is when an individual gains lucidity outside the body and witnesses his physical body sleeping on the bed. This commonly occurs during the near-death experience (NDE), when the departure of the extraphysical body is forced through the critical physical condition of the individual. Thousands of documented reports of accident victims and cardiac arrest patients, among others, attest to this phenomenon known as *self-bilocation*.

Similarly, it is widely reported and acknowledged that the extraphysical body is connected to the physical body by a retractable energy field, known as the *silver cord*. The silver cord acts like a set of reins on the extraphysical body, preventing it from getting lost in extraphysical realms or failing to return to the physical body. The silver cord acts as an energetic intermediary between the two vehicles of manifestation (the physical and the extraphysical bodies) and is broken only at the time of biological death, at which point the extraphysical body (housing the consciousness) departs to begin a new period between physical lives (the intermissive period).

The silver cord is sometimes referred to as one's *bioenergy* or *energetic body* (as it is known when the individual is in the physical waking state). In fact, this energetic body is the connection point through which the fields of energy generated by the *chakras* inside the human body flow back and forth to the nonphysical body.

This constant (usually unconscious) exchange of energy is responsible for maintaining the necessary functioning of the body and for keeping it alive, both when the individual is in the waking state and when he or she is outside the body. This energetic connection similarly enables the nonphysical body to travel far from the physical base.

### Bioenergy: a key component of OOBEs

Bioenergy is one of many terms used to describe the field of energy that emanates from and encompasses every living being. It is also known as *vital energy*, *chi*, *aura*, *prana* and *life force*. A natural element, bioenergy is present in all human processes and interactions. What most people don't realise is that it's also a significant resource that is within our capacity to control.

There are innumerable benefits to



mastering one's own bioenergies. In the context of the OOBE, the control of bioenergies is a key component in producing OOBES, is responsible for the level of lucidity we are able to acquire outside the physical body, and is the resource that enables us to carry out tasks and maintain balance in the extraphysical dimension.

### OOBE, or an altered state of consciousness?

With the silver cord ensuring a constant connection between the physical and extraphysical bodies, it is possible to have a rich variety of lucid experiences outside the body. We can travel in the physical realm or visit other dimensions, meet old friends and make new acquaintances, exercise our will and take decisions. But how can we be so sure that what we experience is *real*, and not a dream or some other altered state of consciousness provoked by any number of things such as fainting, exhaustion, fever, medicines, hormones or drugs?

Some of the characteristics of the conscious OOBE that clearly distinguish it from a dream or hallucination include the following:

- Individuals are lucid, active participants of OOBES, taking decisions and using their mental attributes, whilst in dreams they remain passive, having no control over the dream experience;
- Environments and situations encountered during a projection are real, whilst in dreams they may be distorted or nonsensical;
- Situations encountered in projections occur independently of the individual's capacity for creativity and imagination;
- Projections are more difficult to recollect than dreams, as the experience occurs beyond, and is not recorded by, the physical brain;
- Projectors can see their physical body and even touch it; dreams occur inside the physical body;
- Projectors experience a sense of liberty, well-being, expanded awareness and sometimes euphoria at being able to fly and pass through physical objects; dreams provide more mundane feelings and experiences;
- Projectors often perceive the departure and/or return of their extraphysical body from the physical body; this does not occur in dreams.

### Sensations in the process of leaving the body

To contribute to the understanding of OOBES, we can, for example, look at some of the sensations associated with the process of departing the physical body.

Data collected from students' descriptions of their sensations in experiments held during the practical sessions of the courses on OOBES (offered around the world by the International Academy of Consciousness, formerly known as the International Institute of Projectiology and Conscientiology) suggest that some of the common sensations usually experienced in relation to either leaving or returning to the physical body are: falling, floating and repercussions, e.g., myoclonus (jerking limbs), jerking awake, projective catalepsy (a sleep paralysis type of sensation), sinking, torpidity (numbness), intracranial sounds (a sound that seems to be coming from inside the head), tingling, clairvoyance, oscillation (a type of rocking or swaying sensation), vibrations and serenity. Other experiences reported by the students included the perception of extraphysical beings, sensations such as itching, chills, change of

temperature, pressure in the body, tears (watering of eyes) as well as clairvoyance and the tunnel effect. Respondents also reported experiencing a variety of less-common sensations such as spinning, waves passing through the body, pulsation, swelling, being lifted, dizziness, elongation, dematerialisation and bubbling.

### Current and historical research on OOBES

Personal experimentation is the most logical method for validation of these sensations, and researchers are largely reliant on the accumulation of data relating to personal accounts in seeking to identify the elements common to these experiences. For this reason, survey research has often been used in the study of the OOBE. One of the first recorded was conducted in the UK in 1890 by the British Society of Psychical Research.

More than 100 years later, in 1999, a sophisticated online survey analysing 98 different aspects of the OOBE was launched via the Internet by the International Academy of Consciousness [see NEXUS 6/05]. To date, over 7,000 Internet users have responded. The IAC researchers Wagner Alegretti and Nanci Trivellato

acknowledge that the survey participants are not representative of the general population as they are all Internet users and most had some pre-existing interest in studies of the paranormal. Nevertheless, the results show that many different characteristics of the phenomena associated with the OOBE are shared by people around the world, irrespective of their age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, cultural background, religion, level of education or socio-economic status. This is a significant outcome that further confirms the value of pursuing such investigations. (This survey may be accessed at

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<http://www.iacworld.org>.)

The sensations mentioned previously are corroborated by the preliminary results of the IAC online survey, which reveal that, of the first 1,185 people who responded to this survey in 1999, 1,007 reported experiencing some of these sensations.

Other historical surveys of interest include a study conducted by Celia Elizabeth Green. In 1967, she asked 380 students at Oxford University if they had had any experiences in which they felt themselves to be outside their body. Thirty-four per cent of the students replied affirmatively.

In addition, much experimental research has been conducted by a number of scientists. In 1972, for example, Janet Lee Mitchell, a researcher at the American Society for Psychical Research in New York, USA, carried out a number of experiments aimed at furthering knowledge of vision whilst outside the body. The research subject was Ingo Swann, a known clairvoyant and surrealist painter. During the experiments, different target objects were hidden on a platform suspended 3.5 metres above the floor of the room. After "projecting" his vision, Swann described the objects he saw both verbally and with illustrations. An independent judge correctly matched eight of Swann's drawings with the eight target objects used in the experiment. Such satisfactory results were highly improbable and attest to the "travelling" nature of Swann's viewing.

The following year, Karlis Osis, a parapsychologist, sent an open invitation throughout the United States to all individuals capable of projecting at will, to project themselves out of body and into the premises of the American Society for Psychical Research in New York. One hundred people were selected from the large number

that volunteered. Four target objects were placed at a predetermined location within the building. Although the experiment didn't achieve total success, 15 per cent of the participants produced clear evidence of having visited the office through extraphysical means.

In 1979, in partnership with Donna L. McCormick and again at the American Society for Psychical Research in New York, Karlis Osis tested the kinetic effects of the projected consciousness. The team developed a means of measuring the presence of the extraphysical body of the projector (Alexander Tanous, in this experiment) through a system of sensors placed inside a sealed chamber. In addition, the projector was to attempt to perceive figures that were randomly produced by a specially designed optical system inside the chamber. Of the 197 attempts made by Tanous, 114 hits and 83 misses were made during 20 sessions. Every time that Tanous was able to describe correctly the figure selected and shown, the sensors detected the presence of something inside the shielded chamber.

Currently, an experimental research project entitled Projective Field is being conducted by the aforementioned IAC researchers. The experiment is aimed at understanding the processes by which an individual captures information through the OOBEE and remote viewing. The main purpose of the experiment is to investigate both the apprehension of the information via nonphysical means and the subsequent transfer of this information to the physical brain.

Five batteries of well-designed experiments have already been conducted in Spain, Portugal, the United States and the United Kingdom. External auditors and judges participated in all experiments to attest to the validity of the scientific methodology. Intriguing preliminary results presented at the Third International Congress of Projectiology and Conscientiology at the New York School of Medicine in 2002 showed that, of the 105 participants, 52 reported 93 instances of the OOBEE. The results presented also suggested that shapes of objects, followed by colours, are most easily perceived when outside the body.

### The OOBEE and its applications

Whilst it is important that the sensations associated with the OOBEE along with myriad other related phenomena are studied, identified and understood, it is essential that they be examined as part of a larger context that properly acknowledges the value of the experience.

What precisely, then, is the value of the OOBEE? The real purpose of the OOBEE is to precipitate major personal evolution by providing individuals with opportunities to perceive first-hand the invisible, yet real, nonphysical dimensions with which they interact all the time. A tool for self-research, the OOBEE enables people to know who they really are—that is, they're not just the physical body but a consciousness in evolution.

During OOBEEs, as the consciousness leaves the physical brain and manifests in the brain of the extraphysical body (where the memory of one's previous lives resides) there is an increased probability of recalling past lives and, therefore, of furthering our understanding of evolution, the process of physical birth and death and the cycle of successive lives.

It's also logical to reason that the acknowledgement that we do not die brings with it a complexity of consideration relating to: past

and present relationships and possible interconnections between the two; pathologies that have manifested over previous lives in addition to the current life; the period between lives; our multidimensional curriculum; and our purpose or task in this physical life.

### Where do we go when we leave the body?

A consensus of opinion derived from conscious projectors and researchers who have recorded their experiences throughout history has provided much information about the nonphysical dimension. Anyone who is interested to verify this information may do so by having lucid OOBEEs.

Whilst there is only one physical dimension, the extraphysical dimension is multi-layered, consisting of many planes or dimensions. This makes the OOBEE an extremely rich, educational and interesting experience. However, the majority of people, when they leave their bodies, remain in the dimensional layer closest to the physical dimension (Earth's crust).

Typically, a particular dimension is inhabited by consciousnesses who share affinities in terms of the quality of their energies, intentions, thoughts and sentiments. For example, there are dimensions populated by those who lack awareness of the fact that they are no longer alive in the biological sense.

Other dimensions, by contrast, are inhabited by advanced societies, communities of evolved consciousnesses who are fully aware of the ongoing cycle of successive lives. These consciousnesses plan their next physical life according to objectives that include assisting humankind, evolving further and assisting others with their evolution.

### Mechanisms that facilitate and inhibit projective ability

Although every human being experiences some degree of separation of the extraphysical body from the physical body every night while sleeping, the big challenge lies in being able to

achieve enough lucidity whilst out of the body to be able to be certain of what is happening and to control the experience. This would consequently assist in the recall of the experience once back in the physical body.

Fortunately, however, a number of mechanisms that facilitate lucid OOBEEs have been identified. These include basic, practical considerations such as wearing loose clothing and lying in the dorsal position. The room should be dark, quiet, totally private, climatically controlled and free of interferences. Concentration on a target or (ethical) objective of the OOBEE will also facilitate the process. The individual will also benefit from being relaxed, well rested, in a state of emotional equilibrium, motivated, confident of achieving success and without fear or doubt about the experience.

Other factors are similarly known to inhibit OOBEEs or diminish their quality. The following are some activities that should be avoided prior to attempting leaving the body: watching films or reading books that are either exciting or violent in nature, engaging in conflict with others, thinking negative thoughts, drinking or using any type of drug, or indulging negative emotions of any variety, especially fear.

The practitioner should also take care of physiological needs prior to trying to have an OOBEE, as a full stomach or bladder, for example, will make it difficult to be comfortable and forget the physical body—a prerequisite for having an OOBEE.

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In the same way, factors and techniques that facilitate the recall of the period spent outside the human body have been identified. For example, applying oneself to the improvement of one's will and memory and to one's capacity for attention and concentration can all contribute to the recollection of the extraphysical experiences.

As it is easier to provoke an OOB from some altered states of consciousness than from the ordinary physical waking state, then those interested in producing lucid OOBs should take advantage whilst experiencing such a condition (if positive or sound) such as: physical tiredness, lucid dreaming, the hypnogogic (alpha) state or deep relaxation.

However, the most important qualities, essential to producing lucid OOBs, are *strong desire, mental concentration and determination*. The effectiveness of these personal qualities should not be underestimated.

Beyond these, there exist countless other techniques for provoking lucid OOBs. One of the most comprehensive lists, describing 37 techniques in detail, can be found in a book entitled *Projectology*, by Waldo Vieira, MD.

The degree of success of one technique over another is purely personal, so practice and trial and error will determine which techniques work best for each individual.

### Levels of lucidity experienced outside the body

Considering that every human being without exception can temporarily project the consciousness from the physical body, and that this seems as natural a process as breathing and sleeping, then why is it that practically 99 per cent of humans do not remember having any extraphysical experiences?

The answer to this is simple. It's because the majority of people leave their bodies with no lucidity or awareness at all. Many factors, common to the average person, prompt this condition. These include: a lack of interest in everything that is nonphysical; an all-consuming fixation on all things physical; an inability, through ignorance, to distinguish the experience outside the body from a dream of no consequence; and scientific and/or religious conditioning.

But this is not an all-or-nothing scenario. Individuals can experience different levels of awareness outside the body. In a state of semi-awareness, for example, the individual will typically be confused as to his condition and be open to interference from dreamlike images or nightmares.

On a scale of 0–100% of extraphysical lucidity, it is at a level of about 60% that the projected individual gains certainty as to his extraphysical state.

During a lucid out-of-body experience, the individual is able to access and employ all of the capacities he enjoys in the waking state, such as memory, rationality, decision-making and critical judgement.

### Types of out-of-body experiences

There are innumerable types of OOBs. These vary according to the way in which they occur, in their nature and in their purpose. For example, the most common type of out-of-body experience is the "spontaneous" (or accidental) experience, in which the projector did not intend to leave the body (and often does not even know about the phenomenon). By contrast, an intentional OOB is one that has been purposefully provoked by the application of a projective technique.

Among the many other types of OOBs, we can also cite the "confirmed" experience, which is when the individual attains enough lucidity outside the body to perform a practical task that enables him to confirm his extraphysical state; for example, seeing something in the physical dimension that can be confirmed later. It is this type of experience that allows scientists to conduct experimental research on the OOB phenomenon.

Another very common type of experience is the "leisure" OOB that is typified by feelings of liberty and well-being and often includes extraphysical flights.

Some also claim to have had experiences in which they encountered a friend, family member or other acquaintance who has passed away. Others have had encounters with friends who were also conscious outside their bodies and were able to communicate with them during the experience.

One of the most interesting types of OOBs, however, is the continuously conscious OOB, during which the individual maintains awareness through all stages of the experience; in other words, during the period of their normal waking state, their relaxation, the separation

of the nonphysical body, the period spent outside the body, the return of the extraphysical body to the physical body and, finally, the return to normal waking state (waking up upon returning).

### Projective phenomena

Paranormal phenomena are very much a part of our ordinary physical day-to-day lives. We may benefit from a series of synchronicities—for example, receive a signal that we feel compelled to act upon in some way, or play the role of a (secondary) messenger to someone we know, passing them a message that we don't understand but that has clear implications for them. Yet without a perspective that includes extraphysical dimensions and beings, we assign the resulting fortune (good or otherwise) to chance, luck or fate, failing to recognise that we are in fact experiencing a paranormal phenomenon such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, channelling or intuition.

This is another reason why research, both personal and formal, is important, as it allows us to identify and study nonphysical dimensions and beings and therefore better understand the true nature of our reality.

The nonphysical dimension, however, is so different to the



physical, material existence to which we are accustomed that during conscious OOBEs we are exposed to conditions that are totally outside our usual frame of reference. For example, when manifesting outside the body, we can fly, we can have 360-degree vision, and in some cases we can do things such as exit the Earth's atmosphere at astonishing speeds.

Similarly, when the extraphysical body is in a state of nonalignment with the physical body (as is the case in either a partial or full projection), a whole range of psychic phenomena and perceptions can occur that fall well outside our regular perception of life.

The ability of individuals to experience such phenomena is a normal condition of the consciousness when projected from the physical body with a high level of awareness, and operates independently of the level of the individual's psychic capacities in the normal physical waking state.

Some examples of projective phenomena include:

- **Self-bilocation** – in which the person perceives himself to be in two places at once. A common example of this, as previously mentioned, is when the individual can see his or her (motionless) physical body whilst manifesting in the extraphysical body.

- **Self-permeability** – in which the projected individual is able to move through physical objects.

- **Internal autoscoping** – in which the individual has an internal view of his own body, and can see his own bones and organs either with the consciousness inside the brain or outside the physical body.

- **Cosmoconsciousness** – a state of highly expanded awareness, in which the individual perceives the order, balance and logic of the universe, simultaneously feeling and celebrating that he or she is a part of it and at one with it. This condition is known by many other names in various fields and religions, including *nirvana* (Buddhism), *satori* (Zen Buddhism) and *samadhi* (Yoga).

- **Precognition** – in which the individual, fully projected from the physical body, obtains information relating to events that have not yet occurred.

- **Retrocognition** – in which the individual, fully projected from the physical body, obtains information relating to events that have already occurred, most commonly about him or herself from this life or previous lives.

- **Extraphysical telepathy** – in which the projected individual communicates with others who are in the physical, projected or nonphysical condition through the transmission of thought.

### Interaction between physical and nonphysical worlds

The out-of-body experience provides us with an insight into and allows us to understand better how the physical and nonphysical dimensions interact. Thus it is a valuable evolutionary and self-research tool. Knowledge of the mechanism of interaction between these dimensions helps to explain some things in our lives that we would otherwise not be able to explain without resorting to beliefs.

Some examples of phenomena not explained by conventional scientific knowledge today include: the instinctive but certain knowledge that an unseen force is helping us at critical moments in our lives; certain life-changing inspirations and intuitions; perplexing synchronicities; and the sudden (and apparently inexplicable) onset of various moods and emotions.

The theory of the existence of an interrelation between the physical and extraphysical dimensions also explains many documented phenomena such as poltergeists, "material" apparitions of deceased persons who perform a rescue or communicate vital information, and the perceived presence of a relative who has passed away in his or her former home, to name a few.

In the same way that we have relationships and interactions with other physical beings, be they family, friends, work colleagues, acquaintances or strangers, we also have relationships and interactions with extraphysical beings every day. By working at developing awareness of these beings, the nature of our connections to them and their actions and influences upon us, we can have a better understanding of them and we can use this understanding to exert a greater level of control over our lives.

Cosmoethical extraphysical beings—individuals of a heightened level of awareness, whose intentions for us are constructive in an evolutionary way—are known by many different names including helpers, spirit guides, guardian angels, (nonphysical) masters, mentors and protectors. Unfortunately, many of these expressions have a mystical or religious connotation attached to these beings, when there is nothing mystical or religious about them. They are individuals like us, expressing a high level of maturity and lucidity during their period between lives. They are still evolving, and as

part of their evolution they will have future physical lives. These beings specialise in providing assistance to individuals in need. Their work is characterised by their discretion, their level of ethics and their respect for the free will of all individuals. Their presence does not promote any type of guruship, as it generates an increase in our levels of lucidity, rationality and critical thinking.

### Benefits of conscious projection

Throughout this article we have seen that the out-of-body experience is very rich in terms of the opportunities it provides for the individual to expand

his or her awareness and to evolve as a consciousness. It is worthwhile to summarise some additional comments on the key benefits of the OOBEE.

Through having lucid OOBEEs, individuals are provided with irrefutable personal evidence of life after death. They may even recall the plan of action (purpose) for this life that was established prior to being born, which can help them to reprioritise their lives. They may also recall past lives or periods between lives whilst lucid outside the body.

Regular lucid experiences outside the body have the effect of enhancing the individual's parapsychic abilities, extrasensory perceptions and sensitivity to energies and of promoting the development of energetic self-control and personal energetic defence capabilities. Equally, an accumulation of such experiences enables individuals to develop awareness of the nature of their energetic interactions with both physical and nonphysical beings, to offer assistance to needy beings through the transmission of therapeutic energies, to communicate directly with evolved extraphysical beings whose presence the great majority of people are not able to perceive, to expand their self-knowledge and to accelerate the process of personal maturation.

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### A new science for a new century

Many societies of the 21st century have matured beyond the unfounded fears and superstitions that may have limited the perspective of their ancestors. As more people around the world have better access to education, ideas, information and the world at large than ever before, they have become increasingly resistant to traditions belonging to bygone eras and are more questioning, critical, discerning and independent in their thinking.

Consistent with this general shift towards transparency, it is possible today to study the out-of-body experience within formal, structured, academic environments. In Brazil in 1989, for example, a new science, conscientiology, was proposed for the study of consciousness (individual essence, soul or spirit) with rationality and logic, free of all dogma, rituals and mysticism. This relatively new science takes into account all the attributes of the consciousness, its phenomena (including the out-of-body experience), and the fact that it has multiple lives and can manifest both inside and outside the physical body.

The main premise of conscientiology is participatory research. In other words, researchers, students and all interested individuals are encouraged to have their own experiences and verify the true nature of their existence for themselves by using the OOBEx as their main research tool.

The science of projectiology is a sub-discipline of conscientiology, exclusively dedicated to the investigation of the out-of-body experience and related phenomena.

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The IAC is a non-profit scientific and educational organisation dedicated to consciousness studies and research. Its origins date back to 1981 with the creation in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, of the Center for Continuous Consciousness, the brainchild of Waldo Vieira, MD, author of *Projectiology* (2002), *Our Evolution* (1999; reviewed in NEXUS 7/06) and *Projections of the Consciousness* (1997; reviewed in 7/03). Dr Vieira's books and related videos, such as *Out-of-Body Experience: A Glimpse of Immortality* (2000; reviewed in 8/01), can be purchased through the IAC's website, <http://www.iacworld.org>.

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